of investible resources out of which, after meeting working expenses etc. further investments are made in the entire network, including rural areas.

**Expansion of postal services network**

2060. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the Business Standard dated the 7th September, 1998 under the caption 'Postal charges may be pegged to costs';

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government to the observations made therein and facts of the matter;

(c) the details of the action plan finalised for the current year and Ninth Five Year PLan period for expansion of Postal network and services, State-wise and for Maharashtra in Particular; and

(d) the details of thrust areas identified for increased earning of revenue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The news item mentions about National Postal Policy as also efforts being made by Department of Posts to generage additional resources. While the National Postal Policy is yet to be finalised, Government is keen to improve the quality of postal services and pursue the objective of extending basic postal facility to the rural areas at affordable prices and also provide services including value added services to meet the emerging market needs.

(c) The details of Annual Plan are at Annexure "A" [*See* Appendix 185, Annexure No. A] (tentative subject to revision). The ninth plan proposals (tentative subject to revision) are at Annexure-"B" [See Appendix 185, Annexure No. B] The Department does not make any state-wise provision in the five year plan proposals. However, circlewise details of expansion of postal network during the current year is given at Annexure "C" [*See* Appendix 185, Annexure No. C] and activities that are likely to be undertaken during the current year and Ninth Plan for Maharashtra circle are at Annexure "D". [See Appendix 185, Annexure No. D]

(d) The details of thrust areas identified for increased earning of revenue are as under:—

(i) Speed Post

(ii) Business Post

(iii) Express Parcel Post

(iv) Commercial Publicity

**Common Towers for Microwave Facilities**

2061. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any policy decision has been taken to provide common towers for microwave facilities; if so, the details thereof;

(b) the States selected for installation of such towers and the number of towers constructed by Department of Telecommunication in Himachal Pradesh especially at Bharani Fort in Mandi District, Thanedhar in Simla District, Ashapuri in Kangra District, Jijli Mahadevari in Kullu District; and

(c) whether despite several reminders, television equipment has not been provided in this regard and by when Government propose to provide the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) Yes, Sir. In 1995 a policy decision was taken by Telecom Commission & Ministry of Information & Broadcasting jointly for co-locating VLPTs (very low power transmitters) with DOT (Department of Telecommunications) microwave stations including towers for installations & commissioning of VLPTs by Doordarshan Department subject to technical feasibility.